



Ms Maya Kindred  
via email: [mayarose@live.com.au](mailto:mayarose@live.com.au);  
[foi+request-7910-7a663be4@righttoknow.org.au](mailto:foi+request-7910-7a663be4@righttoknow.org.au)

Dear Ms Kindred

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST: No. 2021/22-006  
ACCESS DECISION**

I refer to your request of 30 September 2021, made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act), which has been transferred to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) from the Australian Government Department of Health (Department) under subsection 16(1) of the FOI Act, seeking the following:

- *All studies and/or reports in the possession, custody or control of the National Research Council (NRC) describing the purification (i.e. via filtration and ultra-centrifugation and chromatography) of any "COVID-19 virus" (aka "SARS-COV-2", including any alleged "variants" i.e. "B.1.1.7", "B.1.351", "P.1") directly from a sample taken from a diseased human, where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka Vero cells; fetal bovine serum).*
- *Please note that I am not requesting studies/reports where researchers failed to purify the suspected "virus" (separate the alleged "virus" from everything else in the patient sample) and instead:*
  - *cultured an unpurified sample or other unpurified substance, and/or performed an amplification test (i.e. a PCR test) on the total RNA from a patient sample or from a cell culture, or on genetic material from any unpurified substance, and/or fabricated a genome based on PCR-detected sequences in the total RNA from a patient sample or from a cell culture or from any unpurified substance, and/or produced electron microscopy images of unpurified things in a cell culture.*
- *For further clarity, please note I am already aware that according to virus theory a "virus" requires host cells in order to replicate, and I am not requesting records describing the replication of a "virus" without host cells.*
- *Further, I am not requesting private patient information, or records that describe a suspected "virus" floating in a vacuum; I am simply requesting records that describe its purification (separation from everything else in the patient sample, as per standard laboratory practices for the purification of other very small things).*
- *Please note that my request includes any study/report matching the above description, for example (but not limited to) any published peer-reviewed study authored by anyone, anywhere.*
- *If any records match the above description of requested records and are currently available in the public domain, please provide enough information about each record so that I may identify and access each one with certainty (i.e. title, author(s), date, journal, where the public may access it). Please provide URLs where possible.*

## Timeframe for processing your request

The FOI request was received by the Department on 30 September 2021. As your request specified that you sought documents held by the 'National Research Council', it was transferred to NHMRC under subsection 16(1) of the FOI Act. The statutory timeframe for processing a request is 30 days, starting from the day after the day on which your application was received. Accordingly, the due date for a decision on your request is 1 November 2021.

I am an authorised decision-maker under subsection 23(1) of the FOI Act and this letter sets out my decision on your request for access.

## Decision

In making my decision, I have had regard to the following:

- the terms of your request
- the content of the documents to which you have sought access
- advice from NHMRC officers with responsibility for the matters relating to the documents to which you sought access
- the relevant provisions of the FOI Act (accessed via: [www.legislation.gov.au](http://www.legislation.gov.au))
- the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner's FOI Guidelines published under section 93A of the FOI Act (accessed via: [www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-guidelines](http://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-guidelines)).

I have interpreted the scope of your request to include all documents, studies and/or reports in the NHMRC's possession that describe the purification of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, and/or its variants, RNA genome, from a sample from a person infected with COVID-19 using the methods of filtration, ultra-centrifugation or chromatography. Also you seek documents/reports/studies that describe the amplification of the SARS-CoV-2 RNA genome using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) either from a patient sample, a cell culture or genetic material from any unpurified substance, as well as the production of electron microscopy images of the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

I have interpreted your request as not including documents that only describe diagnostic tests for SARS-COV-2 infection. The isolation and purification of the total SARS-CoV-2 RNA genome is not described in these documents.

NHMRC conducted a detailed search of all electronic files and relevant email mailboxes within the agency in line with the scope of your request. Particular focus was given to the files and emails related to the work of the [National COVID-19 Health and Research Advisory Committee](#) as any documents falling within the scope of your request would necessarily be within these. The search for relevant documents and emails was conducted from 1 January 2020 to present, as the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 to be a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020. The key search terms used were [SARS-CoV-2 and purification/ filtration/ centrifugation/ultra-centrifugation/ chromatography]. Seven (7) documents were identified as falling within the scope of your request, all of which are publically available.

In your request you advised that links to publically available documents would be acceptable. As such, the unique digital object identified (DOI) for each article has been provided in the attached Schedule of Documents ([Enclosure 1](#)) as it is the most reliable and enduring method to access the content of these publications.

## About NHMRC

NHMRC is a statutory agency responsible for **funding** high-quality health and medical research, building research capability and supporting the translation of health and medical research into better health outcomes. It is also responsible for developing evidence-based health advice for the Australian community, health professionals and governments (please see [here](#)<sup>1</sup>) and promoting the highest standards of ethics and integrity in health and medical research.

NHMRC does not conduct/undertake independent research.

NHMRC is committed to supporting the national and international response to the COVID-19 pandemic by funding high quality research, as well as supporting the health and medical research sector more broadly to address the multiple challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. We provide information about [NHMRC's contribution](#) to national and international pandemic research on NHMRC's website, as well as information about the [impact of COVID-19](#) for the health and medical research sector.

## Charges

I have decided not to impose charges for processing this FOI request.

## Your review rights

If you are dissatisfied with my decision, you may apply for internal review or Information Commissioner review of the decision.

### *Internal review*

Under section 54 of the FOI Act, you may apply in writing to NHMRC for an internal review of my decision. The internal review application must be made within 30 days of the date of this letter. Where possible, please attach reasons why you believe review of the decision is necessary. The internal review will be carried out by another officer within 30 days.

### *Information Commissioner review*

Under section 54L of the FOI Act, you may apply to the Australian Information Commissioner to review my decision. Such an application must be made in writing within 60 days of the date of this letter, and be lodged in one of the following ways:

- online: [https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=ICR\\_10](https://forms.business.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=ICR_10)
- email: [foidr@oaic.gov.au](mailto:foidr@oaic.gov.au)
- post: GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW, 2001.

More information about Information Commissioner review is available on the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner website (accessed via: [www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/reviews-and-complaints/information-commissioner-review/](http://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/reviews-and-complaints/information-commissioner-review/)).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/health-advice>

**Questions**

If you have any queries or wish to discuss my decision, please contact the NHMRC FOI Unit at [foi@nhmrc.gov.au](mailto:foi@nhmrc.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

*Signed electronically*

**Adam Chapman**

A/g Executive Director  
Research Quality and Priorities

1 November 2021

**Enclosed**

1. Schedule of Documents